



Keep Charlotte Beautiful 2020 Annual Report





ABOUT THE COMMITTEE

Keep Charlotte Beautiful (KCB) Committee is a volunteer-based affiliate of Keep America Beautiful (KAB) established in 1974. KCB's goals are to:

1. Promote partnership between residents, private organizations, businesses, and government agencies to ensure the City of Charlotte sustains a clean and healthy environment.
2. Enhance public awareness of litter control ordinances
3. Enhance public awareness of recycling
4. Encourage and promote community service
5. Sponsor and conduct various programs directed toward the purpose of developing and maintaining a clean, healthy, and safe community
6. Represent neighborhoods and residents in matters related to the above-stated purposes

The committee has twenty members: 13 appointed by Charlotte City Council and 7 by the Mayor. They meet the first Tuesday of every other month and conduct various subcommittee meetings in the interim. The committee currently contains four subcommittees that support the programming of Keep Charlotte Beautiful: the Great American Cleanup Committee, Beautification Grant Committee, Central Avenue Committee, and Adopt a City Street Committee.

Committee members as of June 30, 2020 were:

Role	Name(s)
City Staff	Nicole Storey (Executive Director), Jonathan Hill (Program Manager)
Chair	Jon Giles
Secretary	Iris Hudson
Committee Member	RB Monroe, Ryon Smalls, Lily Taylor, Casey Brewer, Matt Wilson, Leland McNabb, Jessica Mathewson, Caroline Sawyer, Wendy Sellers, Qnubia Umazar, Edebierto Torres, Dawon Millwood, Caroline Burgett, Octavia Arthur, Adriana Silva, and Kimberly Hofner



2020 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Adopt a City Street (AACs) Program

Sub-Committee Chair: LeLand McNabb

KCB Staff manages the Adopt-a-City-Street program, a year-round opportunity for businesses, neighborhoods and other volunteers to adopt 1-mile or greater street sections to supplement the City's litter collection efforts. Program participants commit to clean their adopted section(s) at least three (3) times per year. In return, participants receive two (2) signs displaying their organization name at locations of their choice along the adopted route, litter cleanup supplies on a lending basis, and recognition through volunteer events and social media.

Like many city programs, Adopt a City Street was impacted by the coronavirus. Staff halted the distribution of cleanup supplies from March until the end of May, and many groups decided to postpone cleanups until after conditions improved. Nevertheless, over 310 groups contributed almost 5000 hours in picking up over 2500 bags of litter throughout the city. This marks an increase in the amount of litter picked up per volunteer since 2019, and a 25% increase over the average number of bags picked up over the last five years. New volunteers adopted an additional 83 miles of road throughout the city.



Community Appearance Index (Litter Index)

Once per year, trained KCB Committee members and volunteers visit 70 pre-determined locations throughout the City to measure the presence of roadside litter, rating each street section on the following scale:

- 1: Minimal or no litter, easily collected by one individual
- 2: Slightly littered, eyes are not continually grabbed by littered items
- 3: Littered, organized effort needed for complete litter removal
- 4: Extremely littered, continuous amount of litter that may need to be professionally removed

Litter index results are used as a tool to communicate the City's success in preventing visual blight through litter prevention efforts to City officials, Solid Waste Services and interested residents.

Litter Index Comparisons by District, 2015-2020

Year	Dist 1	Dist 2	Dist 3	Dist 4	Dist 5	Dist 6	Dist 7	Total Overall	% Change Over Previous Year
2015	1.77	2.03	2.03	2.00	1.80	1.48	1.73	1.83	-2.7%
2016	1.67	2.00	2.23	1.87	1.70	1.83	1.33	1.80	-1.6%
2017	1.83	1.70	1.65	1.77	1.93	1.20	1.28	1.62	-10%
2018	1.97	2.00	2.00	1.60	1.85	1.5	1.3	1.75	8.2%
2019	1.8	2.15	1.95	2.30	1.90	1.40	1.23	1.82	1.1%
2020	1.9	1.85	1.3	2.0	2.3	1.85	1.50	1.81	-0.24%
% Change 2018-19	5.56% Increase	13.95% Decrease	33% Decrease	13% Decrease	21% Increase	32% Increase	22% Increase	0.24% Decrease	

COVID-19 Impacts and Outcomes

With the sudden onset of the coronavirus pandemic in March, KCB quickly shut down its supply lending program. Staff also postponed the Great American Cleanup until October 2020. Litter cleanups slowed, but they never stopped. Instead, volunteer groups, particularly neighborhoods, switched from conducting large scale cleanups to tasking each individual with cleaning up litter on their own time. This method allowed groups to continue making a positive impact on their community while maintaining safe practices.



At the same time, KCB undertook new protocols for cleanups and new ways to stay engaged with Adopt a Street participants. Staff and Committee members hosted several Zoom chats with group leaders. These were designed to provide groups a means of which to share ideas and obtain new ones. The partakers also contributed valuable feedback to KCB.



At the start of Phase 2 of the statewide reopening, KCB began supplying volunteer groups from their Old City Hall location. Group size is currently limited to 15 volunteers or fewer, and staff sanitize grabbers and machine wash safety vests and gloves after each cleanup. Because of the inherent risk of conducting cleanups, KCB staff and committee members are recognizing statements of interest in continuing with the program following the pandemic in lieu of cleanup reports when determining active group status at the end of the fiscal year.

Education and Outreach

Be it tabling at an event or appearing on television, the KCB committee put in the extra effort spread information about KCB and its mission throughout Charlotte this year. Highlights of this year's outreach include the following:

- South End Wine Festival: ~350 engaged, 35 requests for more information on the Adopt a Street Program
- National Drive Electric Week: ~200 engaged, 17 requests for more information on the Adopt a Street Program
- Charlotte Kidz Fest: ~500 engaged
- UNCC Gold Rush Event: ~100 engaged, 25 requests for more information on the Adopt a Street Program



To increase the capacity of KCB to engage in the community and educate the public, the program will host an AmeriCorps Service Member from September 2020 through June 2021.

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**BAGS OF LITTER PICKED
UP IN ONE HOUR,
PLOGGING**

Plogging

Plogging, or picking up litter while jogging, is a movement created in Sweden to encourage environmental stewardship while exercising outdoors. The activity has caught on in the United States, with Keep America Beautiful being a major proponent.

KCB secured a grant through Keep America Beautiful to obtain "plogging kits", each containing a pair of gloves, litter grabbers, and reusable bags. Staff then worked with NoDa Brewing's Running Club, one of the largest in the area, to set up an event.

The grant secured 45 kits; over 90 volunteers arrived for the event. Fortunately, KCB had the extra supplies on hand to ensure everyone could do their part. In the end, these volunteers picked up 35 bags of trash and 5 bags of recycling in just one hour. Based on the success of this event, KCB staff are pursuing new opportunities for plogging at major events, including the Around the Crown 10k in the winter of 2020-2021.



Open Streets Cleanup

Open Streets 704 is a semi-annual festival where streets are closed to encourage neighborliness and alternative modes of transit. To ensure the streets were clean, KCB organized volunteers to clean up along a mile of route through the heart of Uptown.

21 volunteers answered the call and spent two hours collecting 18 bags of litter near the Panthers Stadium and Morehead Street. Afterwards, KCB rewarded the volunteers with Mellow Mushroom for their hard work on what was a particularly warm day.



Keep Charlotte Beautiful Beautification Grant

Subcommittee Chair: Brie Carlson

KCB awards up to \$5,000 each year to neighborhoods, schools, and/or non-profit organizations for community beautification projects. In FY20, KCB received 13 Letters of Intent (LOI's). Upon committee review, four applicants were invited to submit formal applications. Applicants not selected are referred to neighborhood liaisons for support and complementary programs for consideration, including Neighborhood Board Retreats, TreesCharlotte and Neighborhood Matching Grants.

This year's grant went to Galilee Ministries of East Charlotte. The ministry, which provides a variety of resources and services for refugees, immigrants, senior and diversely-abled adults throughout Charlotte, will use the funds to embellish their existing community garden with picnic tables and waste receptacles as part of a plan to turn the property into a community park.

Central Avenue Cleanups

Subcommittee Chair: Dawon Millwood

Keep Charlotte Beautiful's committee maintains approximately one mile of Central Avenue through the Adopt a City Street Program. This year, the committee partnered with Plaza Midwood's Neighborhood and Merchants Associations, also AACS participants, to coordinate cleanups and offer extra incentives for volunteer participation. Over three cleanups, volunteers contributed 115 hours to pick up 46 bags of litter.



